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Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child
Sixty-seventh session
1–19 September 2014
Item 4 of the provisional agenda
Consideration of reports of States parties

List of issues in relation to the report submitted by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela under article 8, paragraph 1, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict

The State party is requested to submit in writing additional, updated information (15 pages maximum), if possible before 15 June 2014.

The Committee may take up all aspects of children's rights set out in the Optional Protocol during the dialogue with the State party.

1. Please provide information on the functioning of the National System for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents in its capacity as the coordinating body for the implementation of the Optional Protocol, and how it coordinates its activities with other bodies involved in the application of the Optional Protocol, in particular with the Ministry of Defence.

2. Please provide the Committee with disaggregated data (broken down by sex, age, ethnic identity and urban or rural origin) on the students attending the military training centres mentioned in paragraph 65 of the State party's report. Please provide information on the right of students to withdraw from such training centres at any time, together with information on the methods used to enforce discipline there. Please also provide information on whether a complaints mechanism is available to students in such training centres.

3. Please provide further information on the roles played by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Defence in military training centres in respect of the education provided in the centres and how study programmes are supervised. Please provide information on the human rights and humanitarian law content in the curriculum of the military training schools, in particular on whether the Convention and the provisions of its Optional Protocols are covered.

4. Please provide information on the content of the Comprehensive Military Education Plan adopted on 24 March 2011 by order of the Ministry of Defence, and on the inclusion of a new subject in the basic education curricula entitled "Overall Defence Training", including whether it is taught by the Bolivarian militias. Please also clarify how the plan

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and the inclusion of this new subject have been made compatible with peace education in the school curricula.

5. In addition to the prohibition of the forced enlistment of children under the age of 18 into the armed forces laid down in article 9 of the Anti-Extortion and Kidnapping Act, please indicate whether any other criminal provisions prohibit the recruitment and use of children under the age of 18 by the armed forces or non-State armed groups and private security and protection firms, and if so, please provide information on the scope of the provisions. If not, please provide information on what steps the State party plans to take to ensure compliance with the Optional Protocol in respect of explicitly criminalizing such acts.

6. Please provide detailed information on the activities carried out to disseminate and provide training on the Optional Protocol, as well as on the human rights training programmes offered to all groups of professionals, such as members of the armed forces, law enforcement officials, immigration officials, judges, social workers, teachers, media professionals and legislators.

7. Please provide information on the activities organized to heighten awareness in society at large, and in particular among children and their parents, in order to make children aware of the harmful consequences of involvement in armed conflict and prevent them from becoming victims of recruitment. In particular, please provide the Committee with information on the activities carried out in the border areas between Colombia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

8. Please provide information on the legislative and administrative measures taken by the State party to prevent and penalize the recruitment of children in armed groups. Similarly, please indicate whether the State party has investigated any possible cases of recruitment of children by non-State armed groups in the states bordering Colombia, such as Apure, Barinas, Táchira and Zulia, and if so, the results of such investigations.

9. Please provide information on the methods and procedures used by the State party to identify children who are at risk of falling victim to practices contrary to the Optional Protocol, in particular owing to their socioeconomic status and the remoteness of where they live. In this regard, please also provide information on the methods and procedures used to identify refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant children who have been, or who are at risk of being, recruited or used in conflicts.

10. Please provide information on the facilities available in the State party for the physical and psychological rehabilitation and social reintegration of children who have been, or who are at risk of being, recruited or used in conflicts.

11. In addition to the prohibition laid down in article 92 (d) of the Child Protection Act, please indicate what additional legislative and administration measures have been adopted by the State party to prevent access to firearms for children and adolescents and what steps have been taken to recover any firearms currently in circulation and used by children and adolescents in the State party.

12. Please inform the Committee whether there is any domestic system of control over the sale and export of firearms in respect of the country of final destination, for example if in such countries children are, or may be, recruited or used in conflicts.